



Lamoille County Planning Commission

Lamoille County Planning Commission
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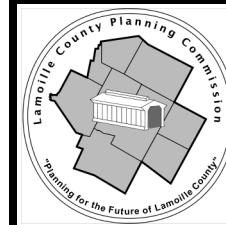
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Farewell, Andrea!

On behalf of everyone at LCPC, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Andrea Lauritzen, who ended her internship with the commission on September 21st. Andrea recently accepted a new position as an environmental technician. Congratulations and best wishes, Andrea!



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Fall, 2010

2010 Jim Marvin Awards

LCPC Recognizes Community Contributions

The Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) is pleased to announce the winners of the 2010 Jim Marvin Awards.

“Ninety-two years ago a love story began with the construction of a twenty-sided barn in Morrisville. Today, a modern-day love story is providing the impetus to save that same barn from the destructive forces of time and weather.” So begins an article in *The Bridge*, describing Earl and Arlene Welch’s loving restoration of their historic Round Barn on Route 12. Nominated by Ken Gibbons, Union Bank President, the project received the Commission’s Excellence in Project Design award for a labor of love that pulled together family, friends, and community. Round barns were popularized in the late 19th century by agricultural colleges experimenting with progressive farming methods. They were promoted for both their efficiency in materials and their labor-saving layout. Picture and text of the restoration are available on-line at <http://welchroundbarn.shutterfly.com>.



Lea Kilváyová, Community and Economic Development Coordinator for the Town and Village of Johnson, received the award for Excellence in Community Service. In its nomination of Kilváyová, the Town and Village noted that her poise, personality, and facilitation and grant writing skills have been invaluable in forging community support and building the alliances needed to bring forward many community projects. She has had a profound influence on the community, out of all proportion to the time she is paid and the volunteer effort she commits to local projects.

The Commission offers its congratulations to the awardees and to all of this year’s nominees.

Vermont Ranked High for H1N1 Pandemic Preparedness

In 2009, the influenza A H1N1 pandemic tested pandemic plans and planning assumptions worldwide. As part of its preparedness work, the Vermont Department of Health sponsored *What to do about the Flu*, a series of workshops aimed at educating the public about the flu and reducing its transmission. Vermont Emergency Management and Vermont’s Regional Planning Commission’s assisted the DOH by organizing and advertising the workshops. Because of this partnership and other efforts by the Department of Health, Vermont ranked #4 nationally in terms of preparedness and outreach for H1N1. Congratulations Vermont!

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Upcoming meetings:

Please Drive Carefully!



LCPC Assisting Communities with Red Cross Shelter Agreements

2011 Municipal Planning Grants Available

As the calendar turns to fall, we are again reminded that severe weather looms on the horizon. Vermont winters can bring high winds, snow, sleet, and ice storms—sometimes all at once. In preparation for severe weather and other potential emergencies, LCPC is actively assisting communities establish shelter agreements with the American Red Cross. In the event of an emergency, the Red Cross will manage certified facilities and cover the cost of food, bedding, and medical care for residents in need.

The Vermont Department of Economic, Housing, and Community Affairs is currently accepting applications for the 2011 Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) cycle. The MPG program funds a wide range of projects, including bylaw and town plan updates; infrastructure planning; as well other projects that support designated Downtowns and Village Centers.

This year, grants will be awarded under a new two-tier funding approach. Municipalities may apply for any dollar amount between \$1,500 and \$8,000 without a local match requirement. However, larger grant requests require a cash match for dollar amounts above \$8,000. Online applications are due no later than November 30, 2010. Communities interested in applying for project funds under the MPG program are encouraged to contact Steve Munroe at 888-4548 x109 or steve@lcpv.org. For more information, you can also visit: www.dhca.state.vt.us/Planning/index.htm.

Energy Efficiency & Conservation Block Grant Update

The Lamoille County Planning Commission has obtained Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funds to identify energy systems and resources in Lamoille County, determine how to best utilize them, and insure the County has the energy it needs to encourage future economic and job growth. LCPC is gathering information about energy resources and use in Lamoille County and will be using this information for a GIS (Geographical Information System) analysis of possible facility locations.

LCPC is interested specifically in identifying locations in Lamoille County that may be feasible for co-generation, or combined heat and power, facilities. Last month, municipal utilities and LCPC staff met to discuss previous co-generation efforts, various opportunities and constraints to a co-generation site, and potential sites of interest for the GIS analysis. LCPC agreed to conduct a GIS assessment of potential sites based on the suitability of terrain, local zoning, and access to municipal water and sewer lines.

For more information, contact Steve Munroe at steve@lcpv.org or 888-4548 extension 109.



Regulating Restoration: Do environmental projects require town permits?

Adapted from an article by Deb Perry, Northwest Regional Planning Commission

With the recent emphasis on improving and protecting the waters of the Lamoille River, we have seen an increasing number of restoration projects being implemented in the region. These projects include planting stream buffers, reestablishing wetlands, restoring floodplains, replacing culverts, and building stormwater management ponds and gardens. Do these projects require a local zoning permit? The short answer is “it depends.”

Odds are good that your regulations do not specifically include environmental restoration projects. The next time you update your regulations this may be something to consider. To determine whether a restoration project requires a permit, here are a few questions to consider:

Is the project located within a wetland as shown on your FEMA maps? If your town participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), you are responsible for regulating ALL DEVELOPMENT that is proposed within the mapped floodplain. It is important to note that the NFIP’s definition of development may be more inclusive than the definition used elsewhere in your zoning regulations. In your town’s floodplain regulations, certain things may be exempt while others may require ZA approval or conditional use review. If construction of culverts, bridges and other road-related work is not specifically exempt in your floodplain regulations and is proposed in mapped floodplain areas, it does require a local permit.

Is the project considered an “Acceptable Agricultural Practice”? Under Vermont statute, Acceptable Agricultural Practices (AAPs) are exempt from local zoning. These practices include fencing livestock out of streams, building and maintaining drainage ditches, building and maintaining farm roads, and stabilizing streambanks in farm fields. If you are unsure of whether a project is considered an AAP, contact the Agency of Agriculture, Farm, and Markets.

Does the project require excavation or fill? Often floodplain and wetland restoration projects and stormwater management projects require excavation and constructed wetlands and stabilization projects may include fill. If your zoning ordinance requires a permit for these activities, it should be required for the restoration project unless they are specifically exempt. Regulations on these activities typically require appropriate erosion control practices, revegetation of restored areas, and appropriate disposal of excavated materials.

Does your town regulate projects that impact wetlands? Your regulations may have rules about construction activity occurring in or near a wetland. Unless specifically exempt, restoration projects affecting wetlands should comply with these regulations. In general, projects that propose to drain stormwater from development into wetland areas should be discouraged. While natural wetlands do filter pollutants and trap sediment, using them as a stormwater treatment facility will affect their natural balance.

Projects to restore the condition of our streams, shorelines, and wetlands are critical to improving the health of our streams and lakes, and, oftentimes, provide other benefits include flood mitigation and wildlife habitat. However, it is important to ensure that these projects are truly providing the benefits of restoration. Culvert maintenance, streambank and shoreline stabilization, stormwater management and constructed wetlands, do not necessarily fall into the category of restoration. When there is doubt about the potential impacts of a project, we encourage you to seek the opinion of the Agency of Natural Resources, US Fish and Wildlife, and other similar agencies. Restoration projects affecting streams, floodplains, wetlands, and shorelines, continue to be regulated by the Agency of Natural Resources and the US Army Corp of Engineers.

If you have questions about how local zoning regulations apply to a particular project in your municipality, contact Steve Munroe at steve@lcpv.org or 888-4548.



Cambridge Honored as Vermont's Only StormReady Community

On August 12th, the Town of Cambridge was recognized by the National Weather Service as Vermont's only *StormReady* community. A nationwide grass-roots program, *StormReady* was designed to improve severe weather preparedness by encouraging community leaders and emergency managers to strengthen local hazard mitigation and emergency response plans. Among the many benefits associated with participating in the *StormReady* program are:

- Improved timeliness and effectiveness in hazardous weather warnings;
- The potential to acquire additional Community Rating System points assigned by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP);
- Rewards to local hazardous weather mitigation programs that have achieved a desired performance level;
- Communication and safety skills to help save lives and property.

In order to be recognized as *StormReady*, communities are required to meet a series of program guidelines, which include the enhanced monitoring of local weather conditions; establishing a 24-hour Warning Point and Emergency Operations Center; and promoting the importance of public readiness. Community leaders, emergency response personnel, or interested citizens that would like more information regarding the *StormReady* program are encouraged to visit www.stormready.noaa.gov or contact Dave Severance, Emergency Management Director for the Town of Cambridge at cambridgewalk1@yahoo.com.

Explore the VT E-911 Board's Portable Map Format!

On Tuesday, August 17th Angus McCusker of the Vermont Enhanced 911 Board visited an LEPC #11 meeting to demonstrate ways to utilize the state's interactive Published Map Format (PMF). PMF is essentially a free statewide map viewer that uses the software program ArcReader in connection with a Global Position System (GPS) locator. Originally created for emergency call-takers, PMF includes the most up-to-date spatial data in Vermont, which is flagged for field verification and updated monthly. PMF contains many useful spatial data layers, including infrastructure, natural resources, and land use characteristics.

For more information on PMF, visit <http://e911.vermont.gov/> or contact Steve Munroe at 888-4548 x109 or steve@lcpcvt.org.



Local Emergency Planning Committee #11 to Host Dam Breach Exercise

On Saturday, October 16th Local Emergency Planning Committee #11 will be hosting a "Tabletop Exercise" to test and evaluate emergency response capabilities associated with a potential breach of the Green River Reservoir Dam in Morrisville. Co-sponsored by the Morrisville Water & Light Department, this exercise will assist department staff in the update of their Emergency Action Plan (EAC). All activities will be held in accordance with the Department of Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Protocol (HSEEP). Morristown Town Administrator and Emergency Management Director Dan Lindley will serve as exercise facilitator and evaluator, bringing a wealth of experience in Homeland Security exercise support.

The information collected during this exercise will assist municipal officials, utility providers, and emergency response personnel improve response coordination in the event of a catastrophic incident. Details from the after-action report will also show local areas of vulnerability to inform future mitigation efforts and improve overall safety and awareness across Lamoille County. If you have interest in observing this event, or being involved in future Local Emergency Planning Committee exercises, contact Steve Munroe, Regional Planner, at 888-4548 x109 or steve@lcpcvt.org